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In this paper, a college professor applies existential philosophic thought to his "everyday teaching practice." He points out the stifling effects of working within a bureaucratic school organization. He presents personal experiences in dealing with the problems encountered daily in the classroom. The professor believes it is possible to, in the words of Maxine Greene, "pierce the webs of obscurity" by "doing philosophy." (Author/JD)

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EXISTENTIAL ENCOUNTERS IN EDUCATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUPERVISION, CURRICULUM, AND TEACHING

BY J. GLANZ, Ed.D

N.Y.C. Board of Education - I.S. 391
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Education
College of Staten Island, CUNY

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EXISTENTIAL ENCOUNTERS IN EDUCATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUPERVISION, CURRICULUM, AND TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, Jeffrey Glanz, applies existential philosophic thought to his "everyday teaching practice." He points out the stifling effects of working within a bureaucratic school organization. He presents personal experiences in dealing with the authoritative supervisor, the prescribed curriculum, and the problems encountered daily in the classroom. Glanz believes it is possible to, in the words of Maxine Greene, "pierce the webs of obscurity" by "doing philosophy."

INTRODUCTION

I have been teaching in the New York City public schools for nearly sixteen years and have witnessed a plethora of changes, some quite dramatic and others less so. I have seen the effects of decentralization, racial segregation, unionism, and bureaucracy. There have been a host of curricular innovations ranging from open education, career education and, currently, the back-to-basics movement. The proverbial pendulum has surely swung its course in New York City. Yet, I have endured despite these vicissitudes. There is something reassuring, constant, and unvarying about teaching for 16 years in what can be called "rough" inner city schools. But am I the same person with the same attitudes and beliefs about education as I was when I first began teaching? Of course not. I have inevitably been affected by the "goings on" outside the "classroom door," as well as by what I experienced in the classroom. I am indeed a different person, with a different educational philosophy, outlook. What then are my views about what I do every day as a teacher?

The persistence of bureaucracy has been perplexing, yet characteristic of American society. The bureaucratic form of organization has been viewed as the "most efficient form of administrative organization" because of its hierarchical structure which clearly defines the role of each individual.1 An historical examination of schooling reveals that bureaucracy became the chief form of school organization beginning in the late nineteenth century.2 In recent years, however, the bureaucratic structure has received voluminous criticism for its rigidity, inhuman control mechanisms, and stifling of individual autonomy. The crucial concern for these critics centers on the cultivation of possibilities for individuals within a society dominated by bureaucracies.3

1. P. M. Blau and W. R. Scott, "The Nature and Types of Formal Organizations," in Organizations and Human Behavior, edited by F. D. Carver & T. J. Sergiovanni (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1969), p. 9.
2. See, for example, David Tyack, One Best System: A History of American Urban Education (Cambridege, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1974).
3. The critique of bureaucracy, the search for greater individuality within contemporary social and cultural life, and other tangential topics are classically analyzed by Paul Goodman, Compulsory Mis-Education and the Community of Scholars (New York: Vintage Books, 1966); Jules Henry, On Sham, Vulnerability and Other Forms of Self-Destruction (New York: Random House, 1973); Carl Rogers, On Becoming a Person (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961); Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counter-Culture (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1969); and William H. Whyte, The Organization Man (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1956).

To be sure, historiographical controversies concerning this problem have flourished and will continue to do so. Profound differences in point of view are never gratuitous. For one person, bureaucracy may be the road to freedom, for another, the road to oppression. However, considering its normative and political dimensions, the pervasiveness of bureaucracy is reflective of a much more fundamental issue. The issue revolves around the attempt to find a balance between order or organization and freedom or individuality. According to John Dewey, the problem of education is the "harmonizing of individual traits with social ends and values."4 In other words, how can we accentuate individuality and, at the same time, maintain an effective organizational or societal framework? Different generations have sought different solutions to this problem. Still, the end result has remained the same; that is, the dominance of order, authority, and bureaucracy over freedom, autonomy, and the individual.

Bureaucracy, it seems to me, is a major monolithic opponent which each and every teacher must learn to grapple with if he or she is to survive in a school system. It seems that this is the most pressing issue confronting teachers, students, administrators, as well as anyone concerned about what happens in schools. The problem centers on the attempt of the individual to express his/her uniqueness within a bureaucratic organization. A major complaint of individuals working in schools has been that there are relatively few avenues open for the expression of one's uniqueness.5 As a teacher, the problems that I confront every day seem at times almost insurmountable. Certainly, the neophyte can be overwhelmed by both the obvious and latent ways bureaucracy manifests itself. The excessive paperwork, closed lines of communication between principal and teacher, inflexible curricula, and the forces of alienation and impersonality all contribute to tensions and dissatisfaction. Going to a place called "school"

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4. K. C. Mayhew & A. C. Edwards, The Dewey School (New York: Atherton Press, 1965), p. 465.

5. Carl Rogers documents teacher dissatisfaction by quoting from teacher's journals. Here are some excerpts:

"Teaching frustrates me so much. There is always more to do, never enough time. There are stupid piles of paper work or administrative duties which interfere with the real job in the classroom. . . ."

"Teaching no longer offers the chance to be creative and stimulating. It's frustrating not to be able to try something different. How can you be a teacher without being creative? I feel angry when I am stifled, not able to use everything I've learned. . . ."

"The students are not robots nor are the teachers, but with the demands of society for budget cuts and higher test scores, we are failing to realize that we are dealing with students who are feeling, total, human beings. . . ."

"As a teacher, I feel I am expected to put in my time. Don't make waves, don't be creative or innovative."

See Carl Rogers, Freedom to Learn (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1969).

under these conditions is tedious, depressing, and certainly unfulfilling (undoubtedly, students must feel the same way). The crucial question I confront daily is: "Can I, as a professional educator, achieve fulfillment within the school bureaucracy?" This paper is an attempt to put into focus the concerns of a teacher working in a bureaucracy regarding his interaction with and involvement in supervision, curriculum, and teaching itself.

The paper begins with three personal experiences of the frustrations felt by a teacher in dealing with supervision, curriculum, and teaching.6 Following each situation is a reaction statement meant to elicit some rather emotional responses. A "solution" then follows describing how one teacher grapples with the dilemma or issues at hand. A major concern pervading all these experiences is that schools do not foster enough individuality nor develop creativity and critical consciousness. The stifling effect of the school milieu contributes to the disempowerment of teachers, as well as other individuals, by limiting their opportunities to develop and exhibit creative thinking and action. In the "solution" offered, an argument is made for an "existential outlook" which might help to redirect our focus to the individual and his self-worth and thus impact positively on supervision, curriculum, and teaching in schools. While the solution presented may not change the "system," it does offer some solace for this teacher and certainly offers possibilities to become more spontaneous, creative, and conscious - a worthwhile goal, I might add, not only for teachers, but parents, students, and anyone concerned about education in our schools today.

It should also be noted that the situations described, the issues raised as well as the solutions offered in this paper are the personal views and experiences of one teacher. No inferences to other school situations are implied or intended. Suffice it to say, that this paper represents the experiences and views of one teacher, this writer. The situations are real and the solutions work - for me.

6. Names, of course, have been altered as well as other details which might otherwise reveal the people and schools involved. In 16 years of teaching I have been in 5 different schools in two boroughs in New York City. Therefore, anonymity regarding events, places, and people can be assured.

Also, it should be noted that the situations I describe are of a personal nature demonstrating my frustrations in dealing with issues involved in supervision, curriculum, and teaching. My intent is not to critique education on a more global level by, for example, discussing federal and state level bureaucracy, state designated curricula, or teacher reform nationwide.

SITUATION # 1: BUREAUCRACY AND ADMINISTRATIVE FIAT: THE TEACHER'S ANATHEMA

A Poem:
The Snoopervisor, the Whoopervisor, and the Supervisor

With peering eyes and snooping nose,
From room to room the Snoopervisor goes.
He notes each slip, each fault, with lofty frown
And on his rating card he writes it down;
His duty done, when has brought to light
The things the teachers do that are not right.

With cheering words and most infectious grin
The peppy whoopervisor breezes in.
"Let every boy and girl keep right with me!"
"One, two, three, four! That's fine! Miss Smith I see
"These pupils all write well." This is his plan:
"Keep everybody happy if you can."

The Supervisor enters quietly,
"What do you need? How can I help today?"
"John, let me show you. Mary, try this way."
He aims to help, encourage and suggest
That teachers, pupils, may all do their best.7

It is a very cold and snowy winter day outside my classroom. The children and I, however, are protected from these harsh extremities. Our classroom is a warm and comfortable refuge from the blustering conditions beyond the four walls. These comforting and pleasant conditions, unfortunately, will soon be disrupted by an obtrusive force emanating from within the school building. In a very short time I will want to leave the protection of the four walls of my classroom and prefer to face the wintery surroundings outside the school.

I am engrossed in a lesson on similes with my 5th grade class. The students in the class are characterized by the school as underachievers. Among the six classes on the fifth grade my class 5-5; that is, fifth from the top based on achievement test scores. I have developed quite a positive relationship with most of the students in the class and have somehow motivated enough of them to behave and cooperate long enough so that learning can occur. While having some difficulty in convincing them that doing homework is a very important aspect of their schooling, I have at least managed to gain their cooperation in the various learning activities during the school day. I like this class and enjoy coming to school each morning to teach them. It's easy to feel this way when you have a class motivated and well-behaved. Of course, it took many months to achieve this.

7. Anonymous, "The Snoopervisor, the Whoopervisor, and the Supervisor," Playground and Recreation XXIII (December 1929), p. 558.

The class is quite attentive as I turn my back away from them to write on the board. Two boys, Edward and Dwayne, ask permission to go to sharpen their pencil and I nod in approval. All of a sudden the grade supervisor, Mr. Gilbert, walks into the classroom with pad in hand and begins to inspect the room. He walks around the room and jots bits and pieces of information on his pad. As he passes me in front of the room, he suddenly turns to face me and says, "Mr. Glanz, don't you know the Board of Education regulation about keeping the windows open only 6 inches from the bottom? Your window is an inch and a half above that limit! That's a safety hazard. Also, why are those two boys out of their seats? And where is the aim on the board? Not a very good lesson I see!" He leaves the classroom - "his duty done, when he has brought to light, the things the teacher does that are not right."

MY REACTION

An innocuous, simple, every day occurrence you might say. Then why am I am steaming mad! I maintain my composure, after all I'm a professional, even though I am rarely treated as one. I understand very well. I understand that Mr. Gilbert was assuming his role as "Snoopervisor." I do accept and acknowledge the importance of the inspectoral function of a supervisor. After all, who else will ensure clean, well-lit and ventilated classrooms?! A very necessary role to perform, albeit lacking any educational substance. Mr. Gilbert in that respect performs his job admirably. The schmuck.

What truly irks me about Mr. Gilbert and those like him, is his lack of courtesy as well as the perfunctory and hollow manner in which he carries out his job. A perfect bureaucrat. Certainly, he found an infraction regarding the windows, although it was not of course a safety hazard which threatened the lives of the children in the class. What really disturbs me was the way he criticized me in front of my class. He could have noted the "infraction" in private, a more courteous and respectful response. I feel undermined, intimidated, and harassed. One of my more sensitive students asked me later if I might lose my job for the incident. I asked him which incident was he referring to, the aim missing on the board or the window infraction? I assured him not to be concerned and we would enjoy many more days together in the classroom.

Additionally, my irritation with Mr. Gilbert was furthered by the inaccurate conclusion he reached regarding both the aim on the board and the boys being out of their seats. Obviously, the boys were not creating any disturbance while sharpening their pencils. What annoys many supervisors is finding children out of their seats, as if that is the major criterion or prerequisite for learning. Also the aim was not placed on the board as of yet because I had not reached the phase in the lesson where I was

going to elicit the aim from the students. Mr. Gilbert apparently was not concerned about the development of my lesson. Rather, having a documented aim posted on the board at all times was more his concern. This, I gather, would somehow ensure that learning was occurring and, perhaps more to the point, cover his _ _ _!

What also bothered me was that he didn't mention anything positive. For example, the fact that the class was quiet and attentively doing their "Do Now" exercise. No mention of any positive aspect of the classroom - Oh Yes, I plead guilty, the windows were open an inch and a half more than regulation!!! I hope I don't lose my pension.

Parenthetically, it must be stressed that I do not mean the foregoing to be a condemnation of all supervisors and supervision. There are many schools where supervisors work in a collegial and helpful way with teachers to improve instruction. My intent, rather, is to present an experience, which I do not consider by the way uncommon, which was quite troublesome to me and one that I have experienced on a number of different occasions at different schools. Teachers I have spoken to also complain of the insensitivity of supervisors to the plight experienced by classroom teachers. One teacher put it this way: "They think that learning is taking place only when the class is sitting quietly with hands folded. I was leading a class discussion on a controversial issue when the supervisor entered my room. 'What's all this noise I hear?' he demanded to know. I explained that the children were divided in small groups to discuss a controversial problem. His only concern, however, was the maintenance of quiet."

I have been teaching for 16 years and consider myself to be an accomplished and dedicated educator. I thoroughly enjoy teaching and get enormous satisfaction from my job. I have had more than one opportunity to leave the classroom for a position as a supervisor or college professor, but I have decided to continue as a classroom teacher. I do so because I love what I am doing. I always wanted to be a teacher. My "dream" was to help others overcome their limitations and realize their potential as human beings. In this pursuit, to paraphrase the words of Erasmus, there is no nobler "occupation." But poor and incompetent supervision frustrates me!

SITUATION # 2: OPEN CLASSROOM/BACK-TO-BASICS: THE PROVERBIAL PENDULUM SWINGS ITS COURSE

My inclination towards open education and other non-traditional approaches stems from my own experiences as a student in school. As a shy, introverted youngster, I did not like school. School for me was an oppressive, non-comforting, and hostile environment. Being quite reticent and at times even withdrawn, I was often overlooked by my teachers. After all, since I was not a discipline problem I posed no threat nor did I demand any attention. Perhaps if I was disruptive I would have received some recognition, which was sorely needed. The private school I attended was an ordinary, unimpressive, traditional facility. Little, if any, individualization of instruction took place and I usually avoided notice by hiding behind Michael, a heavy set boy who towered over everyone in our class. Lessons were generally taught in the typical lecture/group format. School for me was tedious and not a very exciting experience, to say the least.

One of the major reasons for wanting to become a teacher, which I will discuss a bit later on in more detail, stems from my dissatisfaction with my early schooling experience. What really inspired me to enter teaching was an encounter with a 10th grade teacher in high school. Mr. Benjamin, a black geometry teacher, challenged me to participate in class and cared about me as an individual. He noticed me. I was resolute from that year on that I wanted to be a teacher in order to help others like myself realize their hidden potential and achieve the most they were capable of.

As you might very well understand, due to my unsatisfactory experience in school, I was quite interested in exploring alternatives to traditional education. In college I was lucky enough to encounter a professor who advocated alternative methods of classroom organization. My student teaching experiences were in non-traditional settings called "open classrooms." I spent a year studying the approach both theoretically and from practical experience. The notion that the role of the teacher should be to facilitate learning by providing an educational environment conducive to fostering creativity and free choice among students appealed to me greatly. I was particularly impressed with the sensitivity required by the teacher to meet the needs and interests of all students. I was aware of the enormous benefits this non-traditional approach could offer. In short, I was excited, enthused, and prepared.

My first teaching experience in the South Bronx, however, proved to be a rude awakening. The school was situated in an Hispanic and mostly black neighborhood. The principal, his immediate staff, and the central district office were not interested in innovative thinking. Their primary concern was to maintain a "traditional" setting and teach the "3 R's." In my initial discussion with the administration of the school about my philosophy of education and teaching methods, I was instantly informed that

these "avant-guarde" educational theories had no place in the real world, especially in an inner-city school and that if I was to survive I should immediately dispel all of my "liberal" theories about "open" education. "It won't work here and, besides, we won't stand for it."

I immediately realized that I would indeed be unsuccessful in any attempt to disseminate my views about open education. I realized that I could not transform a rigidly traditional school into a more "open" one over night. I did not even try. However, maintaining my commitment to alternatives in education and belief that non-traditional methods do have something to offer, I decided to do the best I possibly could with the class assigned to me. Little did I know that it would be months before I would be able to incorporate any of my non-conventional methods.

I was given the "bottom" fifth grade class. The students in this class were underachievers and some had serious emotional and discipline problems. The average student was two years below grade level in reading and mathematics. Most of these kids were turned off by school and would rather have been at the local arcade. It took almost two months to reach a point where I could give a lesson without a fight breaking out. While I had managed to control these "difficult" students, I was not quite sure if they were learning anything. Dissatisfied with the progress of the class and downright bored with trying to "control" these kids, I decided to take a drastic measure - it was time to employ some non-traditional "therapy."

I decided to develop a "contract" approach to my instruction by meeting, at first, with five selected students and setting up a tailor-made program for each of them. These students would work on individual projects and meet with me at various intervals throughout the day. To make a long and complicated story shorter, within a brief three month period I had the entire class on "contracts." My classroom was transformed into a place where students worked independently or in small group instruction. They enjoyed school, for the most part, and I enjoyed guiding them.

My success was unfortunately short-lived. Although I was quite satisfied at the progress made by my students in such a short period of time, the assistant principal in charge of the fifth and sixth grades was not very receptive to the methods I was employing. On one of his visits to my classroom he found a group of five students sitting on a rug in one corner of the room sharing their compositions on a creative writing assignment. He also noticed about six or seven students out of their seats doing some math work on the board. At first he didn't even see me because I was seated at a student's desk helping a couple of boys with a reading assignment. The class in general was focused on meaningful activities and, most importantly, were learning not only their subject matter but cooperation and independence as well. Later that day I was summoned into his office

where I met not only the assistant principal but other administrators as well. I was informed that they were not satisfied to discover I had incorporated "those" non-traditional curriculum methods. "A reading and math standardized test were coming up soon," I was told. "These kids need as much work on the 'basics' as possible," and that I should immediately and forthrightly disband this "absurd contract work," and return to the prescribed curriculum. Despite my protestations and reassurances that they were receiving enough preparation for the exams and that at least they were now functional as a class, I was urged to abandon my open model in my classroom.

MY REACTION

Disillusionment, distrust, aggravation, and disappointment are only some of the words to describe my feelings after having worked for nearly six months to achieve a workable situation in my classroom. "After all, it was my survival at stake not theirs!" More importantly, the students for, perhaps, the first time were motivated and excited about their schoolwork. Kevin, an habitual truant, for the first time in two years was attending class fairly regularly. Maria, a quiet and withdrawn child was actively participating in our poster contest. Charles and Jose were now able to get along with each other. Jeffrey was now busily engaged in honing his artistic ability. (Under the former curriculum, Jeffrey never received an opportunity to expand his artistic talents). Despite these academic and social improvements, I was told that my innovative approach was not welcomed or desired. Preparing for the upcoming standardized test was to be my primary concern. What was this school interested in, making sure these students pass the "test," or concerned about the total and wholesome growth and progress of all the students? I think I knew the answer.

I know that by the mid-seventies open education was losing favor in educational circles. It became increasingly more difficult to gain support for my efforts. After all, the educational literature was no longer encouraging these non-traditional methods. Yet, the approach was working well for me and for my fifth grade students. What was going on?

The proverbial pendulum had swung its mighty course once again. The history of American education has been a constant shift between traditional and progressive approaches. For example, this can be clearly evidenced by examining recent history in education. In the late fifties, as a result of the Russian launching of the first artificial satellite, the United States placed an inordinate amount of pressure on schools to bolster their curricular programs in mathematics, science, and engineering. Spurred on by a cataclysmic political event, critics attacked Dewey's progressivism and non-academic emphasis as inadequately preparing our nation to compete with the Russians militarily and

technologically. Consequently, articles such as the one appearing in Life magazine titled "What Ivan knows that Johnny doesn't," began to deliver a strong message. The cry for "basics" reverberated throughout the land. However, it wasn't very long after the passage of the National Defense Education Act, which poured nearly a billion dollars into the teaching of hard sciences and foreign languages, that the nation became disenchanted with these latest educational reforms. The call for academic excellence in our schools subsided and a new wave of reform was emerging. "Open education" and other non-traditional approaches were once again now in vogue. Spurred on, in part, by a dissatisfaction with the notion that money is the answer to our educational problems, these latest reformers urged for a total revamping of the curriculum in the schools. As a result, traditional subjects were quickly replaced by independent study and freedom of choice at both the high school and college levels. However, this too was short-lived as a result of a steady decline in test scores all across the nation at all levels of education. The public outcry this time was for a restoration of traditional curricula, a call for a return to the "basics." And on and on it goes!

Diane Ravitch has discussed why there has been a constant shift from "spontaneity and students interests in one decade to rigor and standards in the next?" This "faddism," she posits, "stems from the deeply ingrained conviction among many Americans that the best way to reform society is to reform the schools."8 Hence, when there is a new social problem, e.g., teenage pregnancy, Aids, or even an increase in the rate of traffic fatalities, the public looks to the school to develop a new program to serve as a panacea. This has made schools, in my estimation, vulnerable to social, political, and economic conditions. As a result, schools, like a pendulum, swing back and forth in a desperate effort to meet the needs of society at large. The only problem is that it is the teacher caught in the middle as the pendulum nears its fateful destination.

Once again, what am I supposed to do now? Should I abandon all the individual and group projects we were actively involved with and return to the boring routine of teacher-directed instruction, characterized by recitation, drill, and whole-group instruction simply because it was no longer fashionable? How could I explain to my students that all the hard work we had accomplished would now be discarded? How should I inform them that we must now sit up straight in our neatly formed rows of desks and pay attention to my lessons, answer questions only when called upon, repeat content aloud and behave in an orderly fashion?

8. Diane Ravitch, The Troubled Crusade: American Education 1945-1980 (New York: Basic Books, 1983), p. xii. Also see, Diane Ravitch, "The Educational Pendulum," Psychology Today, (October, 1983).

SITUATION # 3 AND REACTION: WHY DO I WANT TO BE A TEACHER?

It was one of those years. Nothing seemed to being going exactly as I had planned. I looked forward to resume my teaching duties after a long, relaxing well-spent summer vacation. Yet, when I returned to school I was informed that my position was no longer available. Something to do with seniority and rescheduling I was told. I would have understood, I think, had I been informed in person, but to receive a note in my mailbox was just too much. I was assured that I would not be excessed from the school but that I would fill a vacancy in the math department. Although I reminded them that I was not licensed to do so, I was cautioned to accept the assignment or look for another job. "Any really good teacher," I was told, "could teach almost anything." I indeed felt like looking for another job. Why should I remain a teacher?

Given my new assignment, I resigned myself to doing the best job possible. But was this even feasible? No textbooks, few supplies, meaningless paperwork, filthy rooms, and petty politics were only some of the problems I encountered. Why be a teacher?

I hate this job. Monotonous schedules, antsy adolescents, incompetent bureaucrats, substandard remuneration and absolutely no recognition for a job well-performed are good enough reasons to leave teaching. Should I? Will I? Why don't I?

To add insult to injury, an incident occurred at a convention I attended in San Francisco that thoroughly infuriated me. While enjoying a cocktail during a break in a workshop I was attending, I found myself conversing with three other persons. Not knowing each other, the obvious question was "What do you do?"

The first gentleman, dressed in a dapper, knitted blue suit, proudly proclaimed that he was a brain surgeon. (I guess being a "physician" is not enough). The second was a gastroenterologist. The third was a partner in a "prosperous" Wall Street firm.

I admittedly hesitated a bit; but then, with a smile on my face, I proclaimed, "I am a teacher!"

Suddenly, silence prevailed.

One of the doctors broke the uncomfortable stillness and muttered, "Oh!"

While I am usually reticent when it comes to defending my chosen profession, at that moment, I was overcome by a sense of duty to my fellow teachers, to my profession, and, I guess, to myself. I quickly turned to the physician and boldly asked him, "How did you become a doctor?"

He was a bit puzzled, but responded, "Why, I went to a medical school, of course."

I then retorted, "Well, was it the school who taught you how to make the correct diagnosis?"

"Why, of course not! I was taught by a professor."

"Oh! You mean a teacher?" I responded gleefully as I proudly walked away.

Still, the momentary satisfaction I felt quickly dissipated as I returned to the workshop. Why did I hesitate when asked what I did for a living? Am I ashamed of my profession? The question which had gnawed at me for months now resurfaced; why indeed remain a teacher?

MY SOLUTION

There has been much criticism aimed at public education. Various recent committees and commissions have attributed many different causes for the problems with education and teaching in our schools. Each critique carries with it an agenda for some sort of reform. Critics have argued that salaries must be raised, higher standards must be established, a sound and scientific knowledge base needs to be expanded, the creation of a national teachers' board is mandatory as well as a host of other recommendations. All of these are certainly necessary. However, in the opinion of this humble teacher, the problem centers on bureaucracy and its usurpation of individualism in our schools. David Seeley, in his thought-provoking book titled Education Through Partnership, argues for a "restructuring" of American education. The greatest force opposing this effort in education is bureaucracy. Seeley states that "bureaucracy and education are like oil and water - they do not mix."9 As such, individual liberty is curtailed in a bureaucratic organization. Individual initiative is subservient to the mandates of the organization. Ray Rist makes the point in Restructuring American Education, by stating that "the way the educational bureaucracy is organized and the values it espouses are nearly antithetical to the goals of free inquiry and social mobility."10 Seeley concurs and sharply decries the lack of free choice in a school bureaucracy. "Public education is today a professionalized, bureaucratized, governmental enterprise." Seeley continues, "the system is failing and will continue to fail until education is rediscovered as a dimension of human development dependent on personal motivation, initiative, and relationships, . . ."11

It is this "rediscovery" of individual resourcefulness and spirit that I am committed to in this paper. Each of the three "situations" described above in one way or another highlights in rather striking terms the ill-effects of a hierarchically ruled-governed administrative organization. A major concern in each "situation" is the diminution of individual choice and freedom. The problem is striking. Solutions, however, are more elusive. A former teacher of mine once said that the way to solve any problem in life is threefold: 1) to detach oneself from it, 2) to then analyze and understand it, and 3) finally to accept it. This Taoist-based belief that non-action yields action has meaning for me.

1) I detach myself from my predicament by engaging in exciting and creative art forms after 3pm. As one of my colleagues once quipped: "Life begins after 3." Practicing and studying

9. David S. Seeley, Education Through Partnership (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1985): p. 21.
10. Ray Rist, Restructuring American Education (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1972).
11. Seeley, Education Through Partnership, p. 4.

martial arts12 is a catharsis. It is one way I can find self-determination and expression of my individuality. It is become an important vehicle to extricate myself from what Durkheim termed "anomie," the feelings of isolation and sense of powerlessness experienced while working in a school. My participation in martial arts, I gather, is marked perhaps by a degree of rebelliousness - a way of expressing dissatisfaction with the forces of alienation and impersonality. Martial arts allow me to authenticate my existence in this world. I am moved to discard the sense of powerlessness and a mechanistic view of reality by deliberately engaging in a kind of self-reflecting inquiry - a kind of innerdirectedness. This does not mean that I withdraw to detach myself from reality, but rather as a means of becoming conscious of my internal being so that I may have greater receptivity to the external world.13 I become committed to exis-

12. The martial arts (broadly defined as the fighting systems of the Orient) were introduced into the Western world, principally the United States and Canada, as effective means for promoting physical and mental conditioning. The various exercises were seen as unique ways for developing a person's physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being. For an excellent scholarly overview of martial arts see, Donn F. Draeger and Robert W. Smith, Asian Fighting Arts (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1972).

13. To many, the martial and other Eastern arts are merely a means for self-awareness or self-cultivation without attention to an individual's relation to others. Simply said, the individual is to learn "to be in the world, yet not of it" (see Theos Bernard, Heaven Lies Within Us, n.p., n.d. and Jesse Stearn, Yoga, Youth and Reincarnation (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1965). The internationally known pioneer of yoga in the west, Mme. Blanche DeVries, is a noted proponent of such thinking. This kind of solipsistic individualism neglects the examination and study of man in his various dimensions i.e., the social. To be an authentic being living in the world the individual must ask, how do I experience my being with others? Jean-Paul Sartre, in his important treatise Being and Nothingness, asks "what is the synthetic relation which we call being-in-the-world? What must man and the world be in order for a relation between them to be possible?" See, Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology, Translated by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), p. 4. For Sartre, the analysis of human experience necessitates this dialectical relationship between man and his world. According to W. A. Luijpen and H. J. Koren, writers of existential phenomenology, "the term 'existence' is meant to express precisely that the human subject is not what he is without the world: if the world is 'thought away,' the subject can no longer be affirmed. In this sense the world belongs to the essence of man." See, William Luijpen and Henry J. Koren, A First Introduction to Existential Phenomenology (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1969), p. 34. Similarly, John Dewey in Experience and Nature states that "Everything that exists insofar as it is known and knowable is in interaction with other things. . . Man is nothing save the ties that bind him to others." See, John Dewey,

tence or as Merleau-Ponty says "condemned to meaning."14 Paulo Freire, eminent phenomenologist, similarly posits that the attainment of self-realization without engaging in praxis (that is, the "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it") is futile.15 The martial artist, in other words, becomes conscious of his own existence, is able to constitute meaning on his world, and thus able to change it. The martial arts for me has served as a vehicle to act "in-and-with-the-world" to achieve "heightened consciousness and individuality." Can teaching also serve as such?

Before I attempt to grapple with this question, another question, in light of the above discussion, needs addressing; that is, how does my martial arts training accomplish this "liberation of consciousness?" Martial artists strive for perfection of movement and form. When the martial artist achieves this perfection, a balance or equilibrium is said to exist. During this state the individual is relaxed, calm, and tranquil. He/she is in a state of quiescence. The body is relaxed yet alert. Movements are not tense and aggressive but gracefully repelling and statically dynamic. He/she is an individual in-and-with-the-world. The individual is thus able to "anticipate his opponent's next move instinctively and . . . . is able to retaliate at the identical point of attack. . . . this is accomplished only because the mind and body are unified . . . . the mind tranquil and the body ready."16 If total detachment were to occur, there would be disastrous consequences; the inability to react to the attack (being-in-the-world). The result would be a literal detachment or being-out-of-the-world!

The ultimate goal of my martial arts practice is not as commonly thought the attainment of superior fighting abilities or the smashing of countless boards. The movements I practice are but a means of self-expression, self-understanding, and self-revela-

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Experience and Nature (New York: Dover Publications, 1958), p. 175. This is also classically expressed by the Jewish theological existentialist, Martin Buber. Buber's thesis is that man comes to know and experience others through I-Thou" relations. See, Martin Buber, I and Thou (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958). It is my contention, therefore, that the attempt by man to deny his existential reality - his being-in-and-of-the-world - by simply "thinking away" his existence is to be a victim of "false consciousness." The fact of the matter is that man is in-and-of-his-world and to deny this is sheer folly. Rather, the attempt to actualize oneself within the world in order to gain a better understanding of one's relation to others is to enter the "realm of consciousness."

14. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1962): p. xix.

15. Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: The Seabury Press, 1974): p. 36.

16. Wen-Shan Huang, Fundamentals of Tai Chi Chuan (Hong Kong: South Sky Book Co., 1974): p. 109.

tion. I am a being in an infinitely complex world who is engaged in a continuing, internal struggle to combat the forces of "non-being" by attempting to become aware of my own consciousness - my own existence in its temporality. My training becomes an intensely personal journey. My ultimate goal is "to be" - a conscious being continually reflecting upon my existence in-and-with-the-world.

I accomplish this by "doing." That is, by engaging myself fully in the activity. This activity in the martial arts is a series of movements called Kata. The Kata that is particularly suited to deep meditation and introspection is known as Tensho. Tensho kata involves a series of advanced hand movements coordinated with deep abdominal breathing known as "ibuki breathing." In performing Tensho, I assume the "sanchin" posture or stance which gives me a sense of "rootedness." While maintaining a Zen-like concentration I tense my lower abdomen and begin to effortlessly and rhythmically perform the movements. After a short while I begin to transcend the mere physical motions and enter the "realm or state of consciousness." Consciousness, in this sense, not only entails physical and mental alertness but also a sense of harmony, tranquility, and resilience. Performing Tensho is an intensely invigorating experience; a non-verbal, intuitive dialogue with my "inner self."

Tensho is the supreme form symbolizing man's uniqueness and irreducibility. I find self-expression through Tensho. I project outward to the world. I project my individuality unabashedly and wholeheartedly. I impose my will. I choose to be. Through this psychophysical encounter, I am primordially existential.

Tensho cannot be characterized as an abstraction. Its essence is rooted in concreteness and reality. In "doing Tensho" I am not engaged in an intellectual, theoretical conceptualization. Tensho is ultimately rooted in my lived experience. Tensho is "intuitively felt" rather than "intellectually thought about." When I was taught Tensho I was told to imagine myself performing the movements on top of a mountain overlooking the vast countryside. Prior to Tensho I am simply an innate object - indistinguishable and severed from my concrete ground. However, as I begin the intense breathing and muscular contractions, I begin to feel - to transcend merely "doing the form." As one student put it: you are the mountain, the countryside. But you are more important, more alive, more enduring than the mountain and its surroundings. Tensho thusly perceived is a step towards consciousness. This psychophysical engagement or encounter becomes an organismic whole by accentuating one's uniqueness and dynamism.

I have detached myself from the irritating supervisor, the constricting school bureaucracy, and all the nuisances of being a teacher. Detachment does not mean running away from a problem. In martial art terms, yielding does not mean surrendering in defeat. Yielding or drawing away is an effective technique or

strategy to pool one's resources for the next encounter. Detachment means the ability to gain new perspective, freshened vision, and renewed vigor so that I am able to re-enter my school, my classroom and better cope with the situations at hand. Martial arts, for me, serve as a vehicle to attain this renewed vigor.

2) The second step to "solution" for me is historical analysis. Being a conscious being necessitates being intensely aware of what and why things occur. Historical inquiry provides greater insight and understanding into the phenomena which surround me. I must have what Paul Tillich calls "the courage to be," the courage to see myself and the events around me historically, existentially.17 This historical analysis takes on meaning for me on two distinct, yet interrelated levels: A) globally or situationally and B) personally.

A) Unfortunately, the degree to which educators have attempted to examine their inherited modes of behavior and action has certainly been miniscule. There is, however, a growing regard for historical inquiry and its usefulness. How then can an understanding of the history of schooling, especially bureaucracy and supervision, shed light on my experiences? I believe historical analysis can help us understand the antecedents of our present circumstance. By vitally and dynamically recounting history we possess the knowledge, indeed the wisdom, in which to explore contemporary issues, analyze current proposals, and discover new directions. I am not convinced that historical exploration by itself will alter existing conditions, but there remains a strong belief that understanding is a very important first step to "consciousness."

What are the historical antecedents for the current situation in our schools today? The story goes back to the late nineteenth century. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, city school systems were controlled by loosely-structured, decentralized wardboards. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, educational reformers sought to transform schools into a tightly organized and efficiently operated centralized system. Recent educational historiography has focused attention to this period in the late nineteenth century during which the movement towards centralization in large urban cities gained considerable momentum. Tyack, for example, described the centralization movement as one that placed power with the superintendent to expertly administer urban schools.18 In general, reformers during this period sought to remove the schools from what they considered to be harmful, unprofessional influences. The pervasive lay control was considered anathema to these reformers. Centralizers, such as Nicholas M. Butler and Andrew S. Draper, sought to "remove the school from politics" by placing the superintendent in power to control, legislate, and assume responsibility.

17. Paul Tillich, The Courage To Be (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1952).
18. Tyack, One Best System.

"I am not in favor of limiting the authority of city superintendents. If I could", declared Andrew S. Draper, President of the University of Illinois, "I would confer upon them much broader authority than they now have." Draper continued, "I would give them almost autocratic powers within their sphere of duty and action. . ."19 ". . . I am a firm believer in one-man power," claimed Israel H. Peres of Memphis, Tennessee. The superintendent should be superior (emphasis supplied) to the teacher in mental power, culture, and experience; if the reverse is true," continued Peres, "There is a maladministration of forces which works a positive injury to the public school system and tends toward regress instead of progress." "The superintendent is the life-blood of the school system. He is the mainspring; he is the fountain. From him come energy, ambition, progress, life, and success," concluded Peres.20

Before too long, the battle had been won. Authority to make decisions and control school activities was placed in the hands of these centralizers, more commonly known as superintendents. These superintendents were convinced that there was a "one best system" for education. They sought to control educational activity by organizing schools along hierarchical levels. In short, they tried to create a more bureaucratic system. In this they succeeded.

Schools in the early twentieth century were organized hierarchically and bureaucratically. The effects of such an organizational arrangement were clearly evident by examining the relationship between supervisor and teacher in the schools. It seems clear that the superintendent as supervisor did not favorably view the competency of most teachers. In 1894, T. M. Balliet of Massachusetts insisted that there were only two types of teachers: the efficient and the inefficient. The only way to reform the schools, thought Balliet, was to "secure a competent superintendent; second, to let him 'reform' all the teachers who are incompetent; thirdly, to bury the dead."21 Characteristic of the remedies applied to "improve teaching" was this suggestion: "Weak teachers should place themselves in such a position in the room that every pupil's face may be seen without turning the head."22

19. Andrew S. Draper, "Plans of Organization for School Purposes in Large Cities," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1894, pp. 307-8.
20. Israel H. Peres, "What Constitutes an Efficient Superintendent?" National Educational Association Proceedings, 1901, pp. 326-28.
21. Thomas M. Balliet, "Discussion of Anderson's Paper," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1891, pp. 437-38.
22. Frank A. Fitzpatick, "How to Improve the Work of Inefficient Teachers," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1893, p. 76.

William Harold Payne, the author of the first text on supervision in 1875, also believed that teachers were weak and ineffective. Teachers, he said, "need external aid." Payne and his colleagues in the late nineteenth century never questioned the emerging hierarchy in schools. In fact, they supported it. "Human society is a hierarchy of forces. Organization implies subordination," said Payne. He continued, "The many must follow the direction of the few. . . The weak are to be protected by the strong. . ." Parenthetically and related to his views on the school hierarchy, Payne noted that "women cannot do man's work in the schools." Women, said Payne, must instruct children "up to the age of nine years. . . beyond this time there are some branches, as physics, chemistry, and mathematics, which are best taught by men."23 Other nineteenth century educationists had similar views.

William Torrey Harris, perhaps the most prestigious educator of his time, greatly influenced the direction that supervision was to take in the late nineteenth century. Harris maintained that "the first prerequisite of the school is order." Nonconformity and disorganization were evils that had to be expunged, thought Harris. Freedom was not considered by Harris to be a viable option for teachers. This is best evidenced in Harris notion of "supervisory devices," which were to be used by the superintendent to improve "the method of instruction or the method of discipline." Harris contended that this device also proved quite effective "in strengthening the power of governing a school. . ." This device, said Harris, "is the practice of placing teachers weak in discipline on the 'substitutes' list and letting them fill vacancies here and there as they occur through the temporary absence of the regular teacher." "I have known teachers that had become chronic failures in discipline entirely reformed by a few weeks of such experience," said Harris.24 The nineteenth century superintendent as supervisor believed that employing such methods would beneficially affect instruction and teaching in the schools.

In a revealing address delivered before the National Educational Association in 1888, James M. Greenwood, a prominent superintendent, described what perhaps may have been the typical affairs of a superintendent performing the function of supervision:

> Going into a school, I try to put aside everything like authority, or superiority, and to approach the teacher in a proper spirit of helpfulness. . . .
>
> What To Do?

23. William H. Payne, Chapters on School Supervision (New York: Wilson, Hinkle & Co., 1875), p. 49.
24. William T. Harris, "City School Supervision," Educational Review 3: 1892, pp. 169-72.

1. I go in quietly. 2. I watch the teacher and pupils awhile. . . 3. Sometimes I conduct a recitation, . . . and thus bring out points in which she may be deficient. . . 4. If suggestions should be made to the teacher, I do so privately, or request her to call after school. . . I think the question may be put in this form: Given the teacher, the school, the defects; how to improve them?

Signs To Look For

1. Common sense. 2. Good health. 3. General scholarship. . . 5. Order. 6. Ability to manage hard cases. 7. Power to teach. . . 14. Pleasant voice. . . 17. Disposition to scold and to grumble. . . 19. Neatness and cleanliness of the room, desks, etc.

Sometimes I jot down items that need attention and hand them to the teacher. . .

Very much of my time is devoted to visiting schools and inspecting the work.

Greenwood, three years later in 1891, again illustrated his idea of how supervision should be performed. The skilled superintendent, he said, should simply walk into the classroom and "judge from a compound sensation of the disease at work among the inmates."25

The methods employed by superintendents in the late nineteenth century, as described here, were typical and commonplace. Supervision became an indispensable means by which superintendents would maintain control over schools, inspect teachers, and, in effect, legitimatize their "takeover" of urban city schools before the turn of the century.26 Research indicates that one of the consequences of the establishment of a centralized school system was the diminution of individual freedom. Often it was the teacher who was greatly disturbed by this loss of autonomy. A. B. Hart, writing in The School Review in 1893, charged, " Do not insist on uniformity, the great bane of American education." He continued, "Do not make a solar system of our schools, with superintendents as force-giving suns, masters as light-reflecting planets, and teachers as automatic satellites or asteroids." Hart concluded that those in control of the schools should "give us the opportunity to think, to suggest, and to criticize, without our heads rolling off. . . give us more freedom. . ."27

25. James M. Greenwood, "Efficient School Supervision," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1888, pp. 519-21.
26. See, Jeffrey Glanz, "Ahistoricism and School Supervision: Notes Toward a History," Educational Leadership, 35 (November 1977), pp. 148-54.
27. A. B. Hart, "The Teacher as a Professional Expert," The School Review, I (1893), p. 14.

Sallie Hill, president of a teachers' association in Denver, Colorado proclaimed: "There is no democracy in our school system today. Democracy cannot exist with the present system, which gives so much power to those who supervise."28 In an address before the Department of Classroom Teachers of the National Educational Association, F. E. Harden, a teacher from Illinois, charged that "we will never have fundamental democracy in our nation until it is first establisht [sic] in our public schools." Harden lamented the fact that "a small group at the top decides all questions of courses of study, textbooks, and general policies, while the great group below follows unquestioningly and often blindly." He continued to vigorously criticize public schooling by saying that originality was not encouraged. Rather, argued Harden, obedience to authority was rewarded. Anyone who dared "to question the absolutism of those in authority" was "usually made to suffer."29

Margaret Haley, president of the National Federation of Teachers in Chicago, Illinois declared that the system of schooling in the U. S. has destroyed the "individuality of the teacher and her power of initiative." She asserted that there was a ". . . lack of recognition of the teacher as an educator in the school system, due to the increased tendency toward factoryizing education, making the teacher an automaton, a mere factory hand, whose duty it is to carry out mechanically and unquestioningly the ideas and orders of those clothed with the authority of position, and who may or may not know the needs of the children or how to minister to them."30

Dissatisfaction with the newly formed centralized, bureaucratically operated school system was heard from many quarters. The discontent grew steadily throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. This was in large measure attributable to the use of "rating scales" used by supervisors to rate teachers. Influenced by various managerial ideas of "big-business", supervisors sought to devise rating scales to promote "teacher efficiency." Teachers and other educators, however, did not favorably view rating scales and much opposition grew. Ava L. Parrott, a teacher speaking before the Department of Classroom Teachers in 1915, charged that rating scales were pernicious and bureaucratic devices. They are "fundamentally wrong. . . entirely unnecessary, a detriment to good pedagogy." She continued, "rating gives those who rate too great power and places them in a position in which

28. Sallie Hill, "Defects of Supervision and Constructive Suggestions Thereon," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1910, p. 506.
29. Francis E. Harden, "A Plea for Greater Democracy in Our Public Schools," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1910, p. 391.
30. Margaret A. Haley, "Why Teachers Should Organize," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1904, pp. 147-8.

they are open to temptation. Let's rid ourselves of supervision of this sort."31

Jesse Newlon, a prominent superintendent, presented quite a different outlook in 1923. He asserted that supervision and rating were necessary. He insisted that teachers wanted more, not less, supervision. In response, perhaps, to Parrott, Newlon charged that "there are many teachers who resent supervision of any kind and quite often these are the poorest and most talkative teachers in the school system." Newlon lamented the fact that these teachers were "accorded places of leadership in teachers' organizations. Newlon believed that these teachers "are a menace to our profession and their numbers should be eliminated [emphasis supplied]."32 Similarly, H. C. Storm, in 1923, insisted that those who were supervised were overly sensitive and merely stressed "the destructive nature of supervision." "We have classroom teachers who think themselves so perfect and so wonderfully professional that they need no supervision. These teachers," continued Storm, "would do away with all supervision and would sink all supervisors to the bottom of the deep blue sea. If they ever succeed," warned Storm, "our public schools will go to the bow-wows."33

Regardless of these defenses, the criticism against rating was virulent. In 1912, an editorial appearing in The American Teacher, the journal of the AFT, stated that "there is probably nothing, not even meager salaries, that frets and worries teachers more than supervision does."34 Research indicates that many teachers considered supervisory rating as anti-democratic and unprofessional. Sallie Hill, a teacher in 1918, said that "there is no democracy in our schools." She considered rating "vicious". "Here let me say that I do not want to give the impression that we are sensitive. No person who has remained a person for ten years can be sensitive. She is either dead or has gone into some other business," stated Hill. She concluded by saying that there are "too many supervisors with big salaries and undue rating powers."35

In response to this intense criticism, supervision eventually tried to shift its course in favor of more democratic principles and ideas. Samuel T. Dutton, a shrewd observer at the time, said that the efficacy of a centralized school system ". . . will be tested by the degree to which the superintendent succeeds in controlling the huge forces under his command without excessive

31. Ava L. Parrott, "Abolishing the Rating of Teachers," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1915, p. 1168.
32. Jesse H. Newlon, "Attitude of the Teacher Toward Supervision," National Educational Association Proceedings, 1923, p. 548.
33. H. C. Storm, "Three Elements in Effective Supervision," American School Board Journal LXVI (May 1923), p. 58.
34. Editorial, The American Teacher I (April 1912), p. 48.
35. Hill, "Defects of Supervision and Constructive Suggestions Thereon," pp. 506-7.

red tape." He continued, perhaps prophetically, by saying that "if centralization of power should mean such a refinement of rules and such curtailment of individual freedom, and such exasperating espionage as to depress the spirits and cripple the free action of teachers," then Dutton concluded, "There would certainly be a reaction in favor of the earlier and more democratic methods."36

The progressive ideals of Dewey and others which were widely disseminated between 1920 and 1957 gained momentum due in large measure to the criticism leveled against bureaucratic school organization. The pendulum, however, swung once again in the opposite direction as a result of the launching of the Russian artificial satellite, the Sputnik, in 1957. The nation vigorously attacked Dewey and progressivism for the lack of academic preparation in mathematics, engineering, and the sciences. With the passage of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in 1958, the pendulum once again swung back to traditionalism, teacher-centeredness and an academic orientation.

Dissatisfaction continued however politically, socially, and educationally in the sixties and early seventies. The criticism of schools was never so virulent and vociferous. "The schools were mindless, deadening and harmful" places, shouted the reformers of the sixties. It was during this period of time that alternatives to traditional education emerged. The open classroom received much publicity. The pendulum once gain turned to learner-centered and progressive idealism. Unfortunately, this latest "fad" was also short-lived. We are currently in what has been termed a "back-to-basics" era, as we have explained earlier.

This brief overview of the historical development of American education indicates a number of salient points. First, a battle has been waged between traditionalism, with its emphasis on intellect and high academic standards and progressivism, on the other hand, which focuses on individualism and non-academic curricula. We see here the dilemma alluded to at the outset of this paper when Dewey remarked that the "problem of education was the harmonizing of individual traits with social ends and values."37 In other words, the problem of education has been the attempt to balance traditionalism or bureaucracy with progressivism or individual interests. Unfortunately, we have not met with much success in accomplishing this worthy goal.

Second, despite the protestations of progressive idealists, education has maintained its bureaucratic, hierarchical, and traditional posture. The "one best system" initiated in the late nineteenth century proved to be durable as well as immutable. Larry Cuban in his book How Teachers Taught: Constancy and

36. Samuel T. Dutton, School Management: Practical Suggestions Concerning the Conduct and Life of the School (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904), p. 75.
37. Mayhew and Edwards, The Dewey School, p. 465.

Change in American Classrooms, 1890-1980, argues that schools have indeed remained formalized, uniform, and bureaucratic.38 Institutional stability can perhaps best summarize American education during the past 50 years. The old adage "the more things change the more they remain the same" can certainly be applied to the history of education in this century. What remains is a system that is dominated by bureaucracy. Reflecting this organizational framework we find curricula standardized and inflexible and schools, in general, teacher-centered.

Contrary to the evidence cited above, my historical journey into the development of bureaucracy does not leave me depressed or discouraged. Rather, an understanding of the emergence of bureaucracy allows me to more intelligently appraise the current situation of schools and formulate strategies for success. For example, I now realize that my criticisms of supervision are not recent complaints but date back eighty or ninety years and that some supervisors behave the way they do because of bureaucratic and organizational pressures. Supervision, in many ways, functions to support the dominant organization by limiting the autonomy and free will of individuals within schools. Supervisors, in this light, function to maintain organizational goals and objectives. These goals reflect the bureaucratic values of obedience and passivity.39 I have also learned that bureaucracy, with its emphasis on conformity and compliance to prescribed organizational regulations, is a formidable opponent. In martial art terms, the best way to overcome your adversary is to first understand "the nature of the beast." Having done so in regard to the school bureaucracy, it seems to me that an attempt to dismantle or "debureaucratize" schooling is not a viable or fruitful alternative. (I am sure people like Illich, Deschooling Society, and Bowles and Gintes, Schooling in Capitalist America, who were in favor of "dismantling" the "capitalist system" and replacing it with a "more progressive order," would severely take me to task for my conclusions). A more cogent alternative, it seems to me, is to make the "system" work. In other words, to "manipulate," rather than "dismantle" bureaucracy is more realistic. "Restructuring," then, refers to internal change and manipulation as opposed to structural or external alterations. This can be accomplished in a number of ways, both practically and philosophically. I have chosen in this paper to address some philosophical strategies that have proven successful from my experiences.

B) Understanding the roots of current practice in schools from a scholarly point of view is very rewarding for me. At least I now know the reasons why things are the way they are. And that my complaints about the state of education in schools

38. Larry Cuban, How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American Classrooms, 1890-1980 (New York: Longman, 1984).
39. See Barbara Benham Tye, Multiple Realities: A Study of 13 American High Schools (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1985).

today are merely reflective of ongoing criticism of bureaucracy and hierarchy in schools. However, critical analysis on an intellectual level is not nearly enough to cope or remain a "committed, conscious being". Introspection on a personal level is therefore imperative.

"Consciousness" is a calculated attempt to grasp and express my individuality through active engagement in and with the world. Inextricably connected to this notion is the concept of "temporality." I am a temporal being. My existence in and with the world cannot be explained only in terms of the present. As a temporal being, my existence is determined by a past and by a future. The past, present, and future, according to Ernst Cassirer, form an "undifferentiated unity and an indiscriminate whole."40 Friedrich Kummel explains this notion of man's temporality:

> No act of man is possible with reference solely to the past or solely to the future, but is always dependent on their interaction. Thus, for example, the future may be considered as the horizon against which plans are made, the past provides the means for their realization, while the present mediates and actualizes both. Generally, the future represents the possibility, and the past the basis, of a free life in the present. Both are always found intertwined with the present: in the open circle of future and past there exists no possibility which is not made concrete by real conditions, nor any realization which does not bring with it new possibilities. This interrelation of reciprocal conditions is a historical process in which the past never assumes a final shape nor the future ever shuts its doors. Their essential interdependence also means, however, that there can be no progress without a retreat into the past in search of a deeper foundation.41

Consciousness, then, allows me to perceive my biography as a movement within time. The awareness of my historicity or temporality cannot be denied. Consciousness is my ability to analyze critically the social-cultural-historical forces that have shaped me. In order to attain this "conscious" state I must actively and deliberately involve myself in examining my own background consciousness.42 I must seek to explore and analyze the

40. Ernst Cassirer, An Essay on Man: An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1953), p. 219.
41. Friedrich Kummel, "Time as Succession and the Problem of Duration," In The Voices of Time, Edited by J. T. Fraser (New York: George Braziller, 1966), p. 50.
42. See, William Earle, The Autobiographical Consciousness (Chicago: Quandrangle Books, 1972) and, more recently, R. L. Butt, "The Illucidatory Potential of Autobiography and Biography in Understanding Teacher's Thoughts and Actions," A paper presented at the founding conference of the International Study Association on Teacher Thinking, Tilburg, Holland, October 1983.

factors or forces that have shaped my "historico-autobiographical existence."43 Similarly, Paulo Freire refers to the concept of "conscientization" as a "process in which men, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality."44 Maxine Greene describes what this kind of "interior journey" can mean for the individual:

> The individual can release himself into his own inner time and rediscover the ways in which objects arise, the ways in which experience develops. . . . Not only may it result in the effecting of new syntheses within experience; it may result in an awareness of the process of knowing, of believing, of perceiving. It may even result in an understanding of the ways in which meanings have been sedimented in an individual's own personal history.45

In undertaking this historical journey, I realize the importance of looking beyond the officially defined or commonly accepted beliefs of human action. Engaged in historical inquiry I seek to shatter what Alfred Schutz calls "the social world as taken for granted."46 In doing so I examine my personal life-history in its fullest dimensions. As a teacher I am an historical being and am thus aware of my incompleteness. To authenticate myself as a conscious individual means to understand my biography, temporally.

This notion of identifying, confronting, and transforming reality through what Philip H. Phenix calls "the experience of reflective self-consciousness"47 is not a mere intellectual process, but intuitively perceptive and existentially engaging. The brief case example which follows is my attempt to come to grips with a number of important issues in my own professional life. It is my attempt to gain clear insight, fresh perspective, as well as to find new avenues for the expression of my uniqueness. It is an effort, a struggle to define my existence in a complex, volatile world. A world that at times inhibits my performance as a teacher, as I have explained in the "situations" earlier. It is a quest to combat the forces of dehumanization and inauthenticity that surround my very being.

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43. Alfred Schutz, Reflections on the Problem of Relevance, Edited by Richard Zaner (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 132.
44. Paulo Freire, "The Adult Literacy Process as Cultural Action for Freedom," Harvard Educational Review 40 (May 1970), pp. 221-22.
45. Maxine Greene, "Curriculum and Consciousness," In Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists, Edited by William Pinar (Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Co., 1975), p. 314.
46. Alfred Schutz, "Equality and the Social Meaning Structure," In Collected Papers II, Studies in Social Theory, Edited by Maurice Nathanson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), p. 229.
47. Philip H. Phenix, Realms of Meaning (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964), p. 25.

There is no beginning. There is no ending. I am aware. Time persists; history is in the making or re-making. Where is my place? Can I stop in my tracks, perceive where I have come from and where I shall go?

I grew up in a Jewish-religious environment where the horrors of the Nazi regime were a lucid and constant reminder. My parents wanted to give me the best education possible, so I was sent to a yeshiva. The long, tedious hours and constant pressure to do well proved to be unbearable and had an adverse effect on my personal-psychological being. My public high school years were spent in proving to my friends in yeshiva high school, my parents and myself that I was not "uneducable", as the principal characterized me in the eighth grade. I did fairly well and was motivated by several teachers. It was during this time that I knew I wanted to be a teacher, if for no other reason than to help students realize their own potentials despite the labels given by less sensitive teachers or administrators. Still, dissatisfaction with my own schooling experience prompted me to deliberate on many issues that were problematic in my thinking.

Perhaps foremost in my thinking at this time was a concern for the individual and his right to actualize himself without intrusion by institutional or societal forces. What can the individual do to assert himself or herself in a complex and technologically oriented society? I began searching for answers. At my disposal at this time were some sociological and philosophical approaches toward viewing man and society. I recall writing as follows:

> *Society is seen, by some of us as something external to ourselves. Society predefines and predetermines almost everything we do, from language to the social phenomenon of marriage. The approach to sociology that comes closest to demonstrating this sort of view is the approach associated with Emile Durkheim. Durkheim stresses that society is a phenomenon sui generis; that is, it confronts us with a reality that cannot be altered or reduced to other terms.*[48] *In other words, Durkheim's mechanistic view of reality presumes that freedom does not exist. This image of a "world taken for granted" is merely one side of the coin.*
>
> *The chance of smashing through the "world as taken for granted" view of society is nurtured in Weber's theory*

48. Emile Durkheim, The Rules of Sociological Method (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1938), pp. 1-14.

of charisma.[49] *Simply stated, since the social structure was created by man, it is logical that man can also change it. We have gone beyond Durkheim and have realized that society is also within us as well as "out there".*

Indeed, there is a dialectical interplay between man and society, that society shapes man and that, in turn, man alters society. There are many, unfortunately, who cannot break out and "see" this dialectical relationship. They are, in Sartre's terminology, victims of "bad faith". That is, they "pretend something is necessary that in fact is voluntary. Bad faith is thus a flight from freedom".[50] *Yet "bad faith" shows us that there is a possibility of realizing our provincialism. If there were no freedom or alternatives to choose from then "bad faith" would be a moot term. Therefore, we can do otherwise. I can do something. Yes, I realize the risk involved. It means widening my visions and the demise of my insularity. I accept this.*

It is at this point in my intellectual development that I became critical of traditional philosophy and institutional bureaucratization. Embedded in these ideas is a reliance on rational, idealistic, universal, abstract metaphysical formulations. For example, traditional philosophers such as Aristotle and Hegel conceive man as an abstract being - an "essence." This mechanistic and abstract conception of existence contributes to man's dehumanization and subjugation rather than to his autonomy and individuality. From quite a different ontological and epistemological perspective comes existential thought. Existentialism in direct response to depersonalized and mechanistic metaphysics seeks to invoke a more profound, individualistic, and subjective base to the human world. The attempt to discover the inherent value of humanity within existence or phenomena is of considerable importance. The existentialist struggles to raise human and individual consciousness through coordinating man's life experiences in and with the world, to others and to himself.

Existence, however, is not only being-in-the-world but also, more importantly, being-conscious-in-the-world. Paulo Freire states that it is only "as conscious beings" can men "exist in and with the world".[51] *The term "consciousness" takes on preeminent meaning for the existential thinker.*

49. Hans H. Gerth & C. W. Mills, eds., From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 51-55.
50. Peter L. Berger, Invitation to Sociology (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963), p. 143.
51. Paulo Freire, "Cultural Action and Conscientization," Harvard Educational Review 40 (August 1970), pp. 452-77.

Consciousness signifies, as in the phenomenologies of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, not a believing or reflecting consciousness, but rather an active, living consciousness. Man lives in and with his world- active, committed, aware and liberated. To engage in an existential encounter, to become a being fulfilled and whole, to perceive consciously and deliberately, one must transcend mundane and bodily existence and enter the realm of consciousness.

As a conscious being, I seek self-determination and expression of my individuality. I am moved to discard the sense of powerlessness and a mechanistic view of reality. I therefore deliberately engage in a kind of self-reflecting inquiry - a kind of innerdirectedness. This does not mean that I withdraw from reality, as perhaps Nietzsche would refer to as "disinterested contemplation," but rather as a means of becoming conscious of my internal being so that I may have greater receptivity to the external world. As Maxine Greene would say "a thrusting toward things in the world."52 The individual becomes committed to existence or as Merleau-Ponty says "condemned to meaning."53 Paulo Freire similarly realizes that one is compelled to engage in praxis; that is, the "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it."54 I thus become conscious of my own existence, I find meaning and thus am able to change it.

Teaching, for me, is an art form in which I interact "in and with the world" for the purpose of heightened consciousness and individuality. Teaching is an instrument for "the liberation of one's consciousness." The very act itself is an uplifting, therapeutic experience. No less so than performing Tensho kata. Teaching, interacting with my students, learning from them, sharing, guiding, caring is the essence. No self-serving bureaucrat can negate the satisfaction I derive from teaching. If monetary rewards, respect from the public, and a sinecure were my goals then I would have left teaching long ago. I remain committed to teaching because there is no greater satisfaction personally or benefit societally. Teaching, as one teacher recently stated in the Harvard Educational Review, "is a worthwhile use of my life. I know my work is significant."55 Teaching indeed is a noble, humble, and worthwhile pursuit. There is simply nothing as important. As James McClellan once said: the greatest form of social interaction without which human life would be impossible is the "teaching/learning" act.

52. Maxine Greene, "Cognition, Consciousness and Curriculum," In Heightened Consciousness, Cultural Revolution and Curriculum Theory, Edited by William Pinar (Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Co., 1974), p. 71.
53. Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1962, p. xix.
54. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: The Seabury Press, 1974), p. 36.
55. Margaret Treece Metzger and Clare Fox, "Two Teachers of Letters," Harvard Educational Review 56 (November 1986), p. 351.

Teachers certainly need liberating, but what about our students? Learning in places called schools, unfortunately for many students, is not a very rewarding and enriching experience either.[56] *Instruction has involved rote memorization and a general lack of creativity. Bureaucracy, along with its stifling of individualism has also had negative effects on learners in schools. Education has become, as Freire has stated, "an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. . . ." He continues, "this is the 'banking' concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits. . . implicit in the banking concept is the assumption of a dichotomy between man and the world: man is merely 'in' the world, not 'with' the world or with others; man is spectator, not re-creator. . . he is rather a possessor of a consciousness: an empty 'mind' passively open to the reception of deposits of reality from the world outside."*[57] *How can we nurture uniqueness and individuality in students? How can we foster creative thought, critical inquiry, and reflective thinking? We need, of course, to create or design an educational environment that facilitates and provides opportunities for students to explore and become aware of their consciousness. We need to share our liberation of spirit with them. The individual cannot seek authenticity and heightened awareness unless he/she is given the opportunity to do so. The teacher then is directly responsible for guiding experiences, offering choices, and identifying possibilities.*[58] *To accomplish this is no mean task. It involves a sensitivity, an awareness and certainly the technical competence to create an educational environment that fosters personal growth, new experiences, and heightened consciousness. The responsibility is surely awesome. But what are the alternatives? Can we, as committed beings, deprive ourselves as well as our students of their existential reality? Can we somehow constrain our students and ourselves from becoming spontaneous, creative, and conscious? I think not. It is our single greatest responsibility as educators.*

56. See, for example, Robert Hampel, The Last Little Citadel: American High Schools Since 1940 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986); Arthur G. Powell, Eleanor Farrar, and David K. Cohen, The Shopping Mall High School: Winners and Losers in the Educational Marketplace (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985); and Patricia T. Ashton and Rodman B. Webb, Making a Difference: Teacher's Sense of Efficacy and Student Achievement (New York: Longman, 1986).

57. Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, pp. 58, 62.

58. Teachers are certainly responsible for relating to students as human beings as opposed to treating students as mere cogs in the bureaucratic machinery. See, for example, B. D. Anderson, "Bureaucracy in the Schools and Student Alienation," Canadian Administrator 11 (1971), pp. 9-12 and Donald J. Willower, "Schools and Pupil Control," in Donald A. Erickson, Educational Organization and Administration (Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Corp., 1977), pp. 296-310.

So where is my place? What are my priorities? The direction is clear and straightforward. I am a teacher whose ambition it is to foster and promote, for myself and others, spontaneity, creativity, and critical consciousness. I want my students to become literate, compassionate, and self-directed human beings. There is no greater pursuit nor responsibility as an educator.

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3) I have discussed several problems in this paper that are practical concerns of classroom teachers. The problems encountered by teachers in supervision, teaching, and curriculum need to be addressed fully and comprehensively. There are several important strategies that can be employed. Certainly an effort by administration, both at a local school and district level as well as at the city and state levels, must be formulated and implemented to ensure the continuance of top quality education in our schools. Teachers and parents need to develop strategies of "empowerment" to take responsibility for the conditions in the schools and attempt to work cooperatively on solutions. In addition, supervision needs to be based on a participatory democracy where a collaborative effort will bring together teachers and supervisors in a political alliance that could challenge current bureaucratic constraints with pedagogical and curricular alternatives. Other effective and practical strategies must be utilized. I will not discuss these global or macroscopic efforts which are certainly important. My purpose in this paper is to articulate the concerns of the individual teacher.

Lao Tzu's principle of "wu-wei" has particular meaning for me in terms of informing my actions in school. Wu-wei is explicated at great length in the classic Chinese text, the Tao Te Ching.59 Wu-wei is the principle roughly translated as "non-action yields action." This idea is expressed in the Tao Te-Ching: "The Tao does nothing and yet nothing is left undone." Wu-wei as a principle of non-action does not connote laziness or passivity. Actually, wu-wei literally means to be, to do, to make, to practice. Water is the element used to explain wu-wei. What happens if you try to punch at water? Well, at first the water yields and as your fist penetrates it, the water encompasses and conquers. This idea is explained to the student of self-defense. "Yield, do not oppose your adversary. Use his own momentum to overpower and conquer." Thusly, non-action (not in-action) is an effective strategy in battle.

People who work in schools are also in a "battle." A battle to combat the forces of alienation and impersonality. I have found it beneficial and gratifying to utilize this concept of "non-action" in my personal dealings with bureaucracy and inauthenticity. What have I done? I have yielded and found new

59. For a discussion of the Tao Te-Ching see, Arthur Waley, The Way and its Power: A Study of the Tao Te-Ching and its Place in Chinese Thought (New York: Grove Press, 1958).

outlets for my frustrations in dealing with bureaucracy. I have then returned to the situation with renewed vigor and encouragement in order to engage my opponent through what I have described in this paper as "philosophical manipulation." Through this process of self-introspection I have come to realize that possibilities do exist for people to discover and actualize themselves as individuals despite bureaucratic constraints. We need not view "the system" as a monolithic "steel monster" which inhibits the individual to act independently and decisively. There are alternatives and options from which we may "choose a way of thinking and a course of action."60 My purpose has been to demonstrate that the individual can, as noted educational-philosopher Maxine Greene says "do philosophy: to find apertures in the wall of what is taken for granted; to pierce the webs of obscurity; to see and then to choose."61

I think it was Arthur Schopenhauer who said ". . . the world in which man lives shapes itself chiefly by the way in which he looks at it." I see, on the one hand, schools which suffer from unenthusiasm, squalor, and ineffectiveness; I see supervision based on autocracy and curricula which are pre-packaged and "teacher-proof;" I see teachers, as Jules Henry has expressed, "become frightened into stupidity" because of their sense of vulnerability and powerlessness.62 Yet, on the other hand, I am strengthened by what Jules Henry has said: "The moral of all this is that we must know our strength. Nobody is invulnerable but nobody is as weak as he thinks he is either. Let everyone, instead of saying to himself, 'I am afraid,' say instead, 'I may be stronger than I think.'"63

John Goodlad in a book titled Behind the Classroom Door, argues that teachers have responded in large measure to state-imposed innovation and administrative and curricular fiat by simply "closing their doors" and carrying out their teaching responsibilities.64 Certainly, a more desirable alternative would be for a system based on cooperation and partnership in which teachers would not have to resort to manipulative strategies. However, given the current state of affairs "closing the door" behind bureaucracy has proven very useful. I have indeed "closed my door": practiced Tensho, studied history, engaged in existential self-inquiry, and nurtured individuality for my students, whom I

60. Seymour B. Sarason, The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1971), p. 210.
61. Maxine Greene, Teacher as Stranger (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), p. 263.
62. Jules Henry, On Sham, Vulnerability and Other Forms of Self-Destruction (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 94.
63. Ibid., p. 105.
64. John Goodlad, Behind the Classroom Door (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1970).

care about most, and certainly for myself. Teachers can, "behind the classroom door," become champions of humanism and creativity. The degree to which we foster and support such ideals is dependent not on forces outside the classroom, but on our own initiative and creativity.